

others have left us, to follow our speculations very much in our own way, taking from those schemes, indifferently, any notions that we may approve, and facts or fictions that we may admire.

You would have supposed that these writers had heard of one Jesus Christ, as they had heard of one Confucius, as a teacher whose instructions are admitted to contain many excellent things, and to whose system a liberal mind will occasionally advert, well pleased to see China, Greece, and Judea, as well as England, producing their philosophers, of various degrees and modes of illumination, for the honour of their respective countries and periods, and for the concurrent promotion of human intelligence. All the information which they would have supplied to your understanding, and all the conjectures to which they might have excited your curiosity, would have left you, if not instructed from other sources, to meet the real religion itself, when at length disclosed to you, as a thing of which you had but slight recognition, further than its name ; as a wonderful novelty. How little you would have expected, from their literary and ethical glimpses, to find the case to be, that the system so insignificantly and carelessly acknowledged in the course of their fine sentiments, is the actual and sole economy by the provisions of which their happiness can be secured, by the laws of which they will be judged, which has declared the relations of man with his Creator, and specified the exclusive ground of acceptance; which is therefore of infinite consequence to you, and to them, and to all their readers, as fixing the entire theory of the condition and destinies of man on the final principles, to which all theories and sentiments are solemnly required to be "brought into obedience."

Now, if the fine spirits, who have thus preserved an ample, rich, diversified, crowded province of our literature, clear of evangelical intrusion, are really the chief instructors of persons of taste, and form, from early life, their habits of feeling and thought, the natural result must be a state of mind very uncongenial with the gospel. Views habitually presented to the mind in its most susceptible periods, and during the prolonged course of its improvements, in the varied forms and lights of sublimity and beauty, with every fascination of the taste, ingenuity, and eloquence, which it